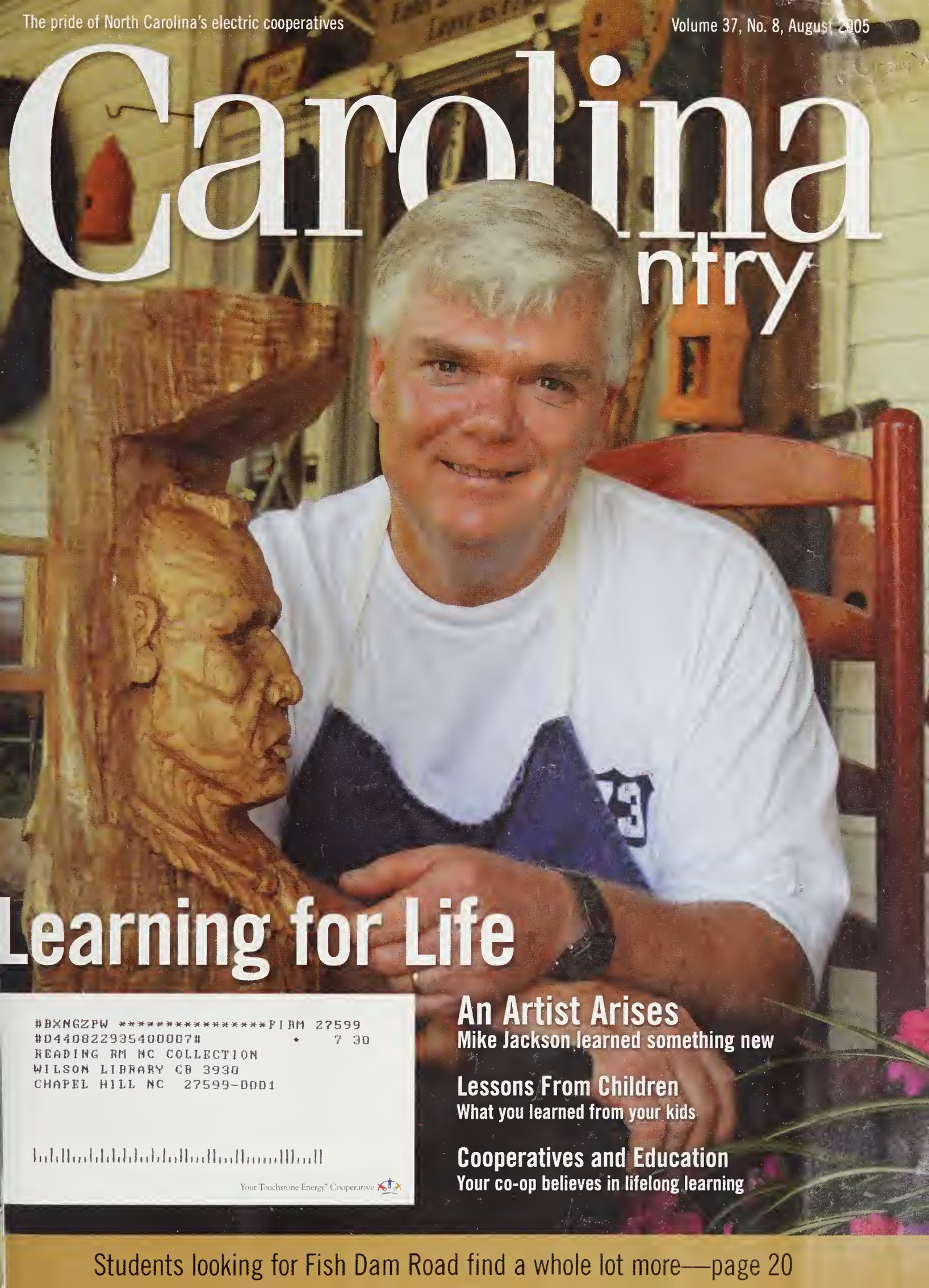
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 37, No. 8, August 2005

Carolina Country



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Students looking for Fish Dam Road find a whole lot more—page 20

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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to 850,000 homes, farms and businesses in North Carolina. The 27 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

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HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

Carolina Country magazine is available monthly to members of North Carolina's electric cooperatives. If you are a member of one of these cooperatives but do not receive Carolina Country, you may request a subscription by calling Member Services at the office of your cooperative. If your address has changed, please inform your cooperative.

AN ARTIST ARISES
After a debilitating accident, Mike Jackson had to learn to do something else. That's when his artistic talent emerged.

14 THE BANDANA PROJECT
Oldtimers in this Mitchell County community began meeting to talk about the old days. They talked about one thing, then another, until they realized they were compiling an archive and learning from each other.

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How to tell a twin...how to calm down...and other lessons your children taught you.

24 LINEMEN IN COLLEGE
Nash Community College gives electric linemen a head start and utilities a recruiting ground.

ON THE COVER
Mike Jackson took up wood carving recently and learned something about himself. See his story on page 12. (Don McKenzie photo)

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Cooperatives and education

By Matt Vernon

I was working a fulltime job when I decided to pursue a college degree. Lucky for me, I was working for Wake Electric, an electric cooperative. My supervisor and the cooperative's general manager supported my decision entirely. The cooperative paid for my books and tuition. When I graduated from N.C. State University in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural and Extension Education, I was one of four graduating students who Chancellor Marye Anne Fox cited in her commencement speech as special examples.

You can imagine how pleased I was. But I also was very proud of my cooperative. I know that the opportunity paved the way for me to contribute more to Wake Electric. Even while I was in school, I could go directly from the classroom to my office and apply what I had learned.

Each Touchstone Energy cooperative in North Carolina values education as much as Wake Electric does. Co-ops consider education part of a community's infrastructure, equally as important as utility services and roads. The contributions that electric cooperatives have made to local schools and their teachers, as well as to the state's community and technical colleges and universities, enrich the lives of our members and communities, and will have lasting benefits. Last year the state's cooperatives awarded more than $530,000 in Bright Ideas grants to local teachers who otherwise would not have been able to implement innovative projects they knew would click with their students. Co-ops give scholarships to high school graduates pursuing higher education, and to adults planning to continue theirs. Since we began our scholarship program at Wake Electric, we have awarded $63,250 to 81 students. We know that the need to learn, and the rewards learning brings, cuts across all social and economic lines.

A grant from Wake Electric funded a project at East Wake High School that combined chemistry and art.

Cooperatives also encourage learning among their own personnel. Utility linemen go through a rigorous education that involves thousands of hours of on-the-job and classroom training. Staff people working in member relations, finance, marketing, engineering and other fields continually attend classes and conferences intended for professional development. And anyone serious about furthering his or her personal education receives support from the cooperative.

Some years ago at Wake Electric, we initiated our "Give Us an A" program, and it has become one of our most popular community activities. Four times a year, we invite students who earn at least one "A" in whatever school or class they attend to submit evidence of that achievement. From the submissions, we conduct a random drawing and award 20 $50 savings bonds to those selected. We believe that even a single "A" is worth recognition. Parents have told us that this program has sparked their children into working for that grade.

In recent years, schools have been under pressure to have up-to-date technology in virtually every field of study. And technology can get very expensive. At Wake Electric, we considered ways to try and help schools acquire what they need. Teaching and learning with the help of technological equipment may not be the most creative educational activity, but it certainly is a necessity these days. We decided to ask educators themselves to tell us what they might need, and to see what we could do. We developed a special application process through our Operation Round-Up program, a charitable program funded by members who "round up" their electric service payment each month to the next highest dollar. In 2004, we supplied $21,732 worth of technology-related aids to teachers in our service area, including a digital teaching camera, a weather monitoring station and a subscription to www.myschoolhouse.com

There is no such thing as too much education. We all know that there is something more we can learn, something more that someone can teach us. In the same way that Wake Electric supported my decision to achieve a college education, cooperatives across North Carolina support their employees, local students, their community schools and the state's educational system in general. The willingness and eagerness to learn and teach strengthens us all. Just as encouraging education strengthens a co-op as well. It's that strong foundation which supports the four standards that define Touchstone Energy cooperatives: integrity, accountability, innovation, and commitment to community.

Matt Vernon is director of marketing and communication at Wake Electric, where he has worked for 20 years. The Touchstone Energy cooperative serves more than 27,500 members in Granville, Vance, Franklin, Wake, Durham and parts of Nash and Johnston counties.

The revival of High Rock Lake

Not long ago, Davidson County and its county seat of Lexington were known nationally for their own brand of politics, but Davidson County is so much more than any one political point of view. We have a wonderful history of barbecue, furniture, craftsmen and artists.

One of Davidson County's largest assets is High Rock Lake. The drought of 2002 left the lake nearly dry, and the problems related to the ecology were like no other recorded in the history of the county. A group of local residents formed a coalition to save the lake. At the same time, a group of investors bought an area of lakefront property off Hwy. 8 in Southmont and turned what was an old sailing club into a haven for wildlife and boaters alike. This area is now called SkipJack's Harbor on the waterfront of Yachtsman's Point.

Bob Wilson of Rowboat Dock and Dredge in Mooresville and a group of investors took this once-shallow cove and dredged it 18 feet deeper so even sailboats with keels can have a dock year-round. I have not seen a more beautiful boat marina in our state. The older docks have all been replaced with Brazilian hardwood. The dirt removed from this cove was used to create a barrier wall which blocks erosion while making a perfect home for wildlife. Mr. Wilson has allowed churches and youth groups to use the property for outings.

Mr. Wilson also expressed an interest in the return of sailboat club races and assisting in a youth program. Member sailors who have boats docked there have also expressed an interest in teaching sailing to youth in our community.

Top: A sailboat at High Rock Lake
Bottom: A John Evers painting of boats at High Rock Lake.

I have enjoyed seeing the return of the great blue herons, and seldom have I visited when eagles were not soaring above and deer swimming the cove.

High Rock Lake has entered the 21st century, and SkipJack's Marina has had a massive impact in the renewal of natural beauty to Davidson County. People who appreciate boating, fishing or just natural beauty can appreciate High Rock Lake as never before. Bring a pole, camera or a canvas and brush as this is truly a picture worth capturing.

John Evers
Davidson County

The nation's best magazine illustrator

Raleigh artist Jack "Jackie" Pittman recently won the award for Best in Magazine Illustration at the National Cartoonist Society's 59th Annual Reuben Awards held in Arizona. Among the works displayed on a huge screen at the ceremony was the cover he made for Carolina Country's July 2004 issue. The Reuben is the highest award offered for American cartoonists, and Jackie has won several. See samples of his work at www.jackpittman.net

The Dumb Deck
and other bad ideas
PITTMAN WINS AT REUBEN AWARDS FOR THE THIRD
TIME
National Cartoonists Society Awards Him Best in Magazine Illustration
Jack Pittman, Illustrator • 919-785-1966

Top: The July 2004 cover.

Bottom: Jackie Pittman's homemade announcement.

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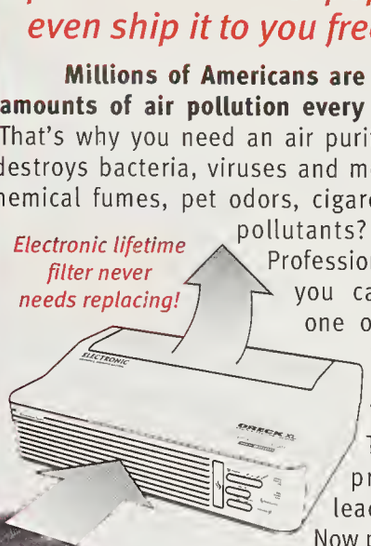

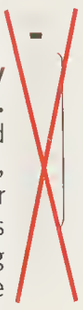

The Oreck Signature Series uses the same advanced technology as the U.S. submarine fleet. It renews the air in a 30'x30' room every hour. It captures 95% of air pollutants as minute as 0.1 microns. That's 1/10000th the width of a human hair. And it features Silence Technology® so it's quiet enough for use in a baby's room. For a limited time, you can try this new Air Purifier risk free for 90 days (we'll pay the shipping) and our $100 Oreck ElectrikBroom® is yours free even if you return the Air Purifier. Decide to keep the purifier and you'll get a bonus gift: the Oreck Refrigerator Purifier (a $50 value!). It removes odors and bacteria and keeps food fresher longer.

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Co-ops place hurricane preparedness help on the Web

With extra line, poles, transformers and up-to-date emergency response plans, North Carolina's electric cooperatives are ready for yet another above average tropical storm season. To make sure consumers are just as prepared, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have built a special hurricane preparedness section on the statewide Web site, www.ncemcs.com. The section went live on June 1 and will remain active during the hurricane season, which runs through November 30.

The statewide office created the section because a recent Mason-Dixon poll showed most adults living in states that border the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico lack basic hurricane-related knowledge. On a 20-question quiz, eight correct answers were the average score. Residents who recently experienced a hurricane fared better, but not by much—they averaged nine correct answers.

"It looks like people have gotten the message to stock up on batteries and water," said Jane Pritchard of the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. "The survey showed people lacked basic and potentially life saving information on threats that can occur hundreds of miles from the eye of a hurricane. As we learned all too painfully last year, people on the coast aren't the only ones vulnerable to damage from a hurricane or tropical storm."

Last season, flooding and landslides from tropical storms killed 11 people in western North Carolina, including three who tried to drive vehicles through floodwaters.

In addition to inland flooding, other hurricane preparedness areas addressed on the www.ncemcs.com site include storm surge, evacuation planning, pet preparedness and electric safety before, during and after the storm.

The state's electric cooperatives have dealt with major tropical or hurricane-related storm damage each year since 1996.

NC students chosen for Youth Leadership Council

Jerome Shoulders of Margaretsville, Northampton County (below right), who this spring represented Roanoke Electric Cooperative during the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., was chosen by the North Carolina delegation to sit on the national Youth Leadership Council. Allen Aycock Jr. of Boone (below left), who represented Blue Ridge Electric, was selected as the YLC alternate. The YLC member will attend meetings in Washington and Orlando to perform functions on behalf of North Carolina's cooperatives. The 35 Tar Heel students were among some 1,400 high school students from cooperatives across the nation who participated in this year's youth tour.

Co-ops at work in Washington

During a spring visit to North Carolina's Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., directors and staff from the state's Touchstone Energy cooperatives discussed federal energy legislation and other issues affecting cooperatives and their communities.

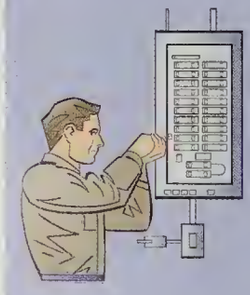
Keith Barraclough

Rep. David Price of Orange County (left) with Randy Brecheisen of Piedmont EMC.

Keith Barraclough

Rep. Mel Watt of Mecklenburg County with Doris Brown of EnergyUnited

Avoid breaker box dangers



When working on your control box, keep these tips in mind:

- If you're not a licensed electrician, never try to repair a fuse or breaker box. If you see broken or frayed wires, if certain circuits trip frequently, or if you notice any other problems, call an electrician.
- Never replace a blown fuse with a substitute, such as a penny, and always use the correct-sized fuse for replacement. A fuse that is too powerful can cause a fire hazard.
- If a fuse or circuit breaker frequently blows, you may have too many appliances, or appliances that may be too powerful, on that circuit. Try unplugging a few items. Then, if the circuit continues to blow, call an electrician—you may have a potentially serious problem.
- Always keep water away from the control panel.

WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS?

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by August 8 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: Carolina.country@ncemcs.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611.

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our September issue, and will receive $25.

¿En dónde se ubica este lugar?

La fotografía muestra una vista rural del estado de Carolina que se encuentra en el territorio de servicio de la compañía Touchstone Energy. Si usted sabe en dónde se ubica el lugar que aparece en la foto, envíe su respuesta antes del 8º. de agosto anotando su nombre, dirección, número telefónico y el nombre de su cooperativa de electricidad. También la puede enviar por correo electrónico a: Carolina.country@ncemcs.com; o bien, por correo ordinario a: Where in Carolina Country? P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611

El ganador, que será seleccionado al azar y anunciado en nuestra publicación de septiembre, recibirá $25.

The Winners:

The scene in the June magazine showed the old Red Lyons store on Hwy. 903 in Greene County between Scuffleton and Ormondsville. Originally owned in the 1930s by Wilbur "Red" Lyons, it is located in Pitt & Greene EMC territory. Tommie Bowen later ran the store for Carson Edwards, and his granddaughter Connie Bowen McLahorn told us that Mr. Bowen was robbed at the store in January 1976 and died of injuries sustained during the robbery. Many remembered how kind Mr. Bowen was. We also heard from Albert Lee Moore, who was the last person to run the store. Many of you sent in the correct answer along with memories of the place. Answers were numbered and the $25 winner chosen at random was Robert Nethercutt of Snow Hill, Pitt & Greene EMC.

Ganadores:

La vista rural que se publicó en la revista de junio mostró la antigua tienda Red Lyons ubicada en la carretera Highway 903 en el condado de Greene, entre Scuffleton y Ormondsville. Originalmente perteneció en los años 30 al Sr. Wilbur "Red" Lyons y está localizada en el territorio de Pitt y Greene EMC. Más tarde, Tommie Bowen administró la tienda para el Sr. Carson Edwards y su nieta, Connie Bowen McLahorn nos dijo que asaltaron al Sr. Bowen en la tienda en enero de 1976 y falleció como resultado de las heridas sufridas durante el asalto. Muchos recuerdan lo amable que era el Sr. Bowen. También se comunicó con nosotros Alberto Lee Moore, la última persona que estuvo a cargo de la tienda. Muchos de ustedes enviaron la respuesta correcta junto con recuerdos del lugar. Las respuestas fueron numeradas y el ganador de $25 elegido al azar fue Robert Nethercutt of Snow Hill, Pitt & Greene EMC.

The scene in the July magazine showed the John W. H. Weston House in the St. Lydia community of Hyde County on Hwy. 264 between Lake Landing and Engelhard. It is within the Lake Landing Historic District, an area served by Tideland EMC. Answers were numbered and the $25 winner chosen at random was Sophia Jarvis of Swan Quarter, Tideland EMC.

La vista rural publicada en la revista de julio mostró la casa John W. H. Weston House, ubicada en la comunidad de St. Lydia, del condado de Hyde, en la carretera Highway 264 entre Lake Landing y Engelhard. Está dentro del distrito histórico Lake Landing Historic District y dicha área recibe los servicios de Tideland EMC. Las respuestas fueron numeradas y el ganador de $25 elegido al azar fue Sophia Jarvis of Swan Quarter, Tideland EMC.

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AN ARTIST ARISES

His wife, Brenda, says, "Every time Mike does a piece, he wants to give God thanks for allowing him to do that."

After a debilitating accident, Mike Jackson had to learn to do something new. That's when his artistic talent emerged.

Text by Karen Olsen House / Photos by Don McKenzie

It all started with the swans. Mike Jackson carved them slowly, simply. He had struggled to find new purpose since a scaffolding accident several years earlier. He and his wife, Brenda, had worked together to move on, attending speech therapy sessions, trying volunteer work around Wadesboro. But Mike was still depressed.

He couldn't return to working as a commercial electrician, his profession for 24 years. He suffered from hearing and short-term memory loss, and his hands trembled. Mike wasn't the type to do nothing, but nothing was looming as he headed, searchingly, into his fifties.

His neurologist suggested that he stay busy, that working with his hands might help. "His doctor," says Brenda, "has a sense of humor, and told him if you can't find anything else to do, pick up a piece of wood and just whittle."

Mike had painted some, but had never carved before. He didn't take the doc's advice right away. At least, until there was something worse to do—housecleaning. "He didn't want to vacuum or do the laundry that day," recalls Brenda, a pretty, white-haired woman. "I found him with a piece of wood. He made two swans."

Then Mike carved some toothpick holders, which looked better than the swans. Clearer, more defined.

From there, the Pee Dee Electric member carved out a new calling for himself and amazed his friends, neighbors and family along the way.

An outlet at Fancy Crafts

Mike's daughter-in-law kept urging his and Brenda's longtime friend and neighbor, Denise Beachum, to view Mike's work. Denise and her husband Danny own Fancy Crafts/Granny Hollow Pottery, a gift shop and teaching studio in Wadesboro. Denise and Danny have taught crafts for years, and are well-respected for their community involvement in the arts. His daughter-in-law would ask the Beachums with wonder in her voice, "Have you seen Mike's carvings?"

Danny eyed 'em first. He looked at the walking staffs with carved faces. A little man chomping a cigar. A Civil War general. "I didn't believe it," Danny says. "The talent! The talent was shining like a light!"

The Beachums began selling Mike's pieces, and customers were struck by the originality and true-to-life colors. "In the beginning, Mike wouldn't put his name on his stuff," recalls Denise. "He'd say 'Why would someone want my name on it.' He finally relented after an excited customer held up a purchase and cried 'I want my piece signed and with dates, too. This boy is going to be famous!'"

Locals began handing their family pictures to Mike, asking him to carve or mold faces and figures. Sometimes Mike would add a character prop, such as a judge's briefcase.

Some puny pumpkins also got things rolling. A man asked Danny to buy his leftover crop. "How much you want for 'em?" Danny asked, slowly. The fellow said, "Oh, ten cents each." Later, Danny considered the 10 or 12 miniature pumpkins he'd bought and wondered what on earth he'd do with them. "But Mike and Brenda stopped by and we got to talking," recalls Danny. "Mike said, 'I'll take one home.' I said, 'Here, take two.' He brought one back with this incredible face."

Danny throws pots to sell in the Fancy Crafts shop, and Mike now decorates Danny's pots with faces, birds, leaves and other decorative elements. Some look comically goofy—caricature mugs with buck teeth grinning jauntily outward. Others look human and haunting in their somber expressions. They start at $150.

Mike also molds clay. His expressive pottery faces range from a vintage-looking aviator with goggles to exotic-looking women with shawls wrapped around their heads.

"I love working with the clay. You can rework it," says Mike, 55, a quiet, serious man. "With wood, you make a mistake, you throw it away." Like many potters, he uses a hair dryer to shape the clay.

He patiently spends hours on fine pieces. A recent wood carving of an electric lineman, complete with rumpled shirt, work belt and hat, took about 88 hours.

He patiently spends hours on fine pieces. A recent wood carving of an electric lineman, complete with rumpled shirt, work belt and hat, took about 88 hours.

Mike sells his work exclusively through Fancy Crafts. The Beachums take only a small percentage of the profit from Mike's work.

Mike makes his creations in his workshop behind his one-story home five miles outside Wadesboro in the Brown Creek community. Mike made the backyard storage shed his own, erecting shelves, building a workbench, installing wiring and an air conditioner. Inside, his tools sit with the letters M J initialed on each gouge, a rainbow of acrylic paints nearby.

A "miracle"

Whether the piece is wood or clay, Mike's body of work reveals remarkable range. He believes it's because so many different people, each with his or her own ideas, have requested custom work. He credits Danny with sprouting a lot of the pot ideas, saying it's sometimes hard for him to come up with his own because of the head injury.

He particularly likes working with cypress knee wood, because its odd shapes inspire him. He took Best in Cypress Knee Carving from the Orangeburg County Fair's show for his carving of an elegant, long-faced lady with tan lace fanned out between her skirt's folds. He carved her from wood his neighbor had next to her fireplace, lopping off two side pieces and making her two Santas in exchange.

Other awards include honors three years in a row for the competitive, national Annual Santa Carving Contest sponsored by Woodcraft stores. His humorous 2005 entry, titled "Santa's Last Stop" shows a slim Santa, rolling his eyes heavenward, grasping a walking stick and pulling a small sled with a few toys left. The civic-minded owner of the McDonald's in Wadesboro erected a large cabinet to show off local art and displays several of Mike's pieces, including "Santa's Last Stop."

Producing versatile pieces has been a learning experience for Mike. "It has been a struggle, but it does seem like it comes natural to me," he says.

He typically works about 10 hours a day in his workshop. "I think that's what's helped me so much. I stay with it every day," Mike says. His grandchildren sometimes sit by him, coloring pictures as he works. Habit-forming, he calls it, and relaxing. "I don't think about nothing except that piece of wood that I'm carving."

Brenda calls it a miracle, his carving, and notes how fortunate it has been that the Beachums had talents that were instrumental in helping Mike with his own.

She also credits prayer. "Mike prayed that his life would have meaning. He thinks God has blessed him with this. Every time Mike does a piece, he wants to give God thanks for allowing him to do that."

The couple, who will celebrate their 35th anniversary this month, has few of Mike's pieces in their own home, "because everything he makes has sold," says Brenda, laughing. But the two small, roughly carved swans are still there, where it began anew.

When Danny Beacham first saw Mike's carved walking staffs, he didn't believe it. "The talent was shining like a light!" Danny says.

People heard about the women's group and would ask, "What did you talk about this week?"

THEY TALKED ABOUT first one thing & then another

By Elizabeth Hunter

Neighbors in the Bandana community of Mitchell County began visiting and swapping stories. They soon realized that not only are they compiling an archive, they also are learning from each other.

The house I live in is called the Marsh Putman place. I found this out years ago from a neighbor—Marsh Putman's grandson—who in his old age wandered the woods and occasionally popped up in my backyard. A shy man and reticent, he told me he had many happy childhood memories of his grandparents, but he did not tell me much more. As I tamed the wilderness that had sprung up around the house—the previous owners were part-timers who used the place for occasional weekend retreats—the hardy remnants of someone's flower garden reasserted themselves: peonies, roses, old-fashioned pink hyacinths and double daffodils. Below the garden, a raspberry patch yielded succulent purple berries I've made into jam for most of the years I've lived in this place. I wondered if I had Marsh and Etta Putman to thank for the flowers and berries.

I might never have found answers to questions like these—or learned that a piece of bottomland I drive by on the way to town was once known as the Hense Davis Stadium—had my neighbors Bruce and Helen McKinney and I not launched a couple of winters ago something we call the Bandana Project. Bandana is the name of our community, a wide place on Mitchell County's Highway 80 strung between two other wide places—Roses Branch and Kona. The project began with some work I was doing—a writing project that required me to interview people who had helped build Blue Ridge Parkway. I'd put a notice in the local paper seeking interviewees and got a call from a neighbor I didn't know, a man named Sherwin Buchanan. Sherwin, now in his 80s, had worked on the final phase of parkway construction near Grandfather Mountain. But he remembered that many Bandana men had helped build a section of parkway up toward Mt. Mitchell back in the Great Depression. Since no one in Bandana had a car then, the government loaned them a dual-wheeled truck with a canvas-covered bed. Fifteen or 20 men, most in their 40s and 50s, piled into that truck bed to endure a long, bumpy commute six days a week because public works programs, of which the parkway was one, "kept people from starving out," he said. "People had always mined around here, and some still did. But times were hard. You couldn't hardly sell your [feld]spar or mica once you got it out of the ground."

Sherwin told me something else before our conversation ended. Before the community had telephone service, whenever anyone died, someone went to the church and tolled the bell—one toll for each year of the deceased person's life. Families working in the fields paused to count the tolls because "everyone knew who in the community was sick and how old they were. When the bell stopped ringing, they knew who had died."

That story made me recall the elderly women who had been living in the community when I moved here in 1976. Two of them had passed the century mark before they died. I'd always meant to interview those women but never got around to it. Another generation of Bandana residents was now in its late 70s and early 80s—people who had lived here before there was one good road, before houses had electric lights. People who remembered Marsh Putman fetching the mail on horseback from Bandana Station, delivering it to the post office in the corner of John Jarrett's store. If I wanted to learn what life was like when people farmed with oxen and sledges instead of tractors, when you walked over Burnt Mountain to get to Bakersville and rode the train to reach Spruce Pine, I'd better start asking questions.

Then they just talked

My original idea was the usual sort of oral history project, where you go to somebody's house and interview them. Trouble was—and to my shame—I didn't know many of my

neighbors, though I'd lived among them nearly 30 years. I did know Bruce and Helen, though, and I knew they were natives—well, Bruce is actually from Roses Branch—and local history buffs. Would they help me get the community's patriarchs together for a group meeting so I could set up individual interviews? Happy to, they said. Hold the meeting at our house.

They recalled their grandfathers watching electric meters like hawks, laughing at the local belief that you could slow the meter down by putting a small bag of salt atop it.

Five men participated in our first meeting. They talked about first one thing and then another—about who among their father's generation had been the best hand at stacking oats, about the first automobile that came through Bandana and how school let out so the kids could see it. They talked about Doss Chandler and his team of oxen who made five-day trips in the 1920s and 30s, hauling mica from the Sinkhole Mine to Plumtree, a community you can reach now in about an hour by car. Doss left home at 4 a.m., camped the first night in Bakersville, five miles away, then camped the second night atop Cane Creek Mountain, maybe five miles further on. They remembered Will Hensley "bringing milk in fruit jars" to the two-room schoolhouse that closed in 1946. They recalled their grandfathers watching electric meters like hawks, dousing the lights and firing up the oil lamps when the monthly charge threatened to exceed $1.50. They had such a good time remembering life in Bandana that they decided to meet the next week and remember some more.

We kept meeting Thursday nights from January into April, when we got busy with our gardens. This January, we started meeting again. We talked one week about farming, another about mining. The men named local landmarks I'd never heard of, chuckled over Halloween pranks, remembered chores they did as children and the touch football they played—a practice that Sherwin said "went back to when our daddies were boys"—down there in the Hense Davis Stadium after long days of working in the fields. The stadium was a quarter acre of bottomland bordered by a briar patch, rocks and the creek. Their only football had been in the creek so many times that it was hard as a rock.

After the men's group had been going awhile, a woman telephoned Helen and said what was good for the gander was good for the goose. So we added a women's group Thursday afternoons. The women talked of wash days, home remedies (for the itch, apply a mixture of sulfur, lard and carbolic acid three nights straight), family reunions, revivals, funerals. They recalled long forgotten odors—apples in a cellar, bed ticks stuffed with fresh straw, floors scrubbed with a homemade brush, lye soap and water—and sounds: the call of whip-poor-wills, the lonesome whistle of steam engines, the gentle clang of cowbells.

I took notes at each session and transcribed them onto my computer. What we're going to do with the material we've amassed, we don't yet know. We hope that children growing up in Bandana will someday want to know what life was like before everybody had TV, when folks gathered in Jess Buchanan's yard on Saturday evenings to listen to the Grand Ole Opry on Jess's radio. But the project has produced more than a growing community archive. Everyone's enjoyed getting together to laugh and reminisce.

Helen McKinney says recalling Bandana's past has given us an appreciation of where we live and makes us proud of our roots. "People in the community who aren't part of either group know about our meetings," she said. "They're always asking me, 'What did you talk about this week?'" As for Ruby Grindstaff, who married into the community 67 years ago, and me, the meetings have taught us things we never knew about Bandana. Ruby's even been inspired to write her life story. Last time I checked, she was on page 52 and going strong.

Writer Elizabeth Hunter and her Bandana neighbors are members of French Broad Electric Membership Corporation.

Start your own community history project

The idea is to revive the kind of give-and-take that occurred when families, friends and neighbors settled into straight-back chairs on front porches to reminisce, swap lies and watch the night come on.

- Invite elders who grew up in your community to a get-together, preferably in someone's home. Talk about what life was like when they were growing up. Include people who moved away but might like to return to reminisce. Add participants as you go along.
- Plan get-togethers to last 2–3 hours. Establish a regular time and place to meet. Cancel a session if you must, but don't switch the schedule around.
- Find a scribe or scribes to take notes. You may want to videotape or tape record the sessions, too. (We didn't have videotaping equipment, and we quit tape recording because we couldn't pick up everyone's voice.)
- Compile a list of topics. Agree on next week's topic before adjourning so you all can think about it before the next session. Keep discussion to the topic.

A 1900 photo of the Bandana church, no longer there. A new church is in its place.

Lessons you learned from children

It's hard to explain all the things I've learned from my children. With those two little girls come the greatest feelings of love and pride and optimism that I ever hope to have. My kids have taught me that I have more patience than I thought possible. They've taught me to really and truly appreciate a full night's sleep. From them I've learned to stop trying to "make plans" because surely as I do one will develop a fever, a cough or a rash. We have learned to go with the flow.

Most of all, every day I have the pleasure of watching my kids love life. They live in the moment, and they always seem to make the most of any situation. My children inspire me to try to do the same.

—Kim Whorton Tripp, contributing editor

GO ONLINE
www.carolinacountry.com

Thanks to everyone who sent stories. Next month we'll publish pictures of people who look like celebrities. [Deadline was July 15.] See the remaining themes and rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series on page 18.

To be thankful

About three years ago, God richly blessed our family by sending us my grandson Jayse Turner.

During a warm Saturday in January, Jayse was getting ready to enjoy a picnic of those wonderful Moravian cookies on his Nannie's front porch. First he wanted to thank God for his cookies. For once, I had my camera in hand at the right moment (photos above).

I am truly grateful for being able to share these captured pictures, as this little guy has captured all our hearts.

Ann Jones
Westfield, Surry-Yadkin EMC

It all comes out in the wash

Most of what I learned from my children was to re-learn what I automatically knew as a child. First, don't discriminate. Not only against people, but against outfits, hairstyles and food choices for breakfast. Second, get over it quickly. My children have forgiving spirits and are quick to forgive my transgressions. Third, and the most important, stay loyal to the ones you love. We cannot give or be everything others expect. I fall short of the mark and so do my children.

Remember as the old folks used to say: It will come out in the wash. That includes the baby formula on your favorite dress, the crayon on the wall and the big dent in your car. That's what I've learned.

Wanda Lee
Fayetteville, South River EMC

See as children see

In an effort to expose our children to different cultures, we would occasionally invite international missionaries to stay with us while they were visiting our church. On one such occasion, we housed two elementary-aged boys from the African Children's Choir from Kenya.

Our younger son, Scott, was small for his age and often teased because of it. Imagine his thrill when James, one of our guests, stood eye-to-eye with him. Scott's baby blue eyes looked into James' black eyes and they both smiled the same toothless grin. They ran up to me to display the pleasure of their new discovery.

Scott gleefully exploded with, "Look Mom! We are eight years old, the same height, the same shoes, and we even wear the same size. We must be twins!" This was rather ironic since they could not have looked more different. Scott's fair-skinned freckled face with strawberry blonde hair versus James' tightly curled black hair and black skin were much more opposites than twins.

I learned that day that we all need to see others through a child's eyes—embracing the similarities rather than dwelling on the differences.

Marie Ogram
Matthews, Union Power Cooperative

Going out to play

In this fast-paced world, we all have more to do in a day than we can get done, but most of us do not want to put things off.

My boys have shown me that by leaving a few things not done and going outside with them to toss the Frisbee or the ball will not kill me, but it will make my day seem worthwhile. Just by being able to play, smile and laugh with them, this makes it all worthwhile. It is good for their health, not to mention mine as well.

They are growing up way too fast, and I am getting older, too. I thank God I am even able to get out there and do things with them, and that they want me out there with them. Little things mean a lot. I hope when I am gone they will look back and remember when Mom would come out and play. I remember when my Dad did.

Debbie Trull
Stanfield, Union Power Cooperative

Stop to smell the roses

I allowed my life to become so complicated with busy-ness and just everyday living, even exercising was just another item on my list of things to do. One day when my daughter and I decided to exercise by walking around beautiful Lake Junaluska in Waynesville she taught me something. We were coming to the end of our fast-paced walk and I was thinking, "Good. One more task completed." Then I watched my little girl stop and smell each of the many different types of roses planted along the sidewalk. She commented on each of the different fragrances and then asked, "Mommy, why don't you ever stop to smell the roses?" Her question hit me like a ton of bricks. My tasks were no longer tasks but opportunities to stop and smell the roses and appreciate and admire life and the beautiful creation that surrounds us.

Cindy Schick
Clyde, Haywood EMC

Living all over again

What I consider weeds, my kids will look at as the most beautiful bouquet they can give. This is true with everything in life. We should all look at what we might first consider "weeds" and find the beauty.

Hallmark could never make a more beautiful card than the one that is handmade with broken crayons and a lot of heart and soul.

My kids are a mirror, and no matter what I say or do, it will come back to me "out of the mouths of babes," and I can see myself as others see me. Most of the time this happens at the most inopportune moments.

We have not one go-around in life, but two, three, etc. The one we live ourselves and the one we live through our children the first time they experience something that we have long taken for granted.

All stress and heartache can be solved with a smile or an "I love you, Mom."

What my single friends consider to be a burden is the most precious gift God can give. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Lori Poole
Sparta, Blue Ridge EMC

Not necessarily yours

My 3-year-old nephew Jamie was visiting me one summer. He found a red ball in the road, picked it up and started playing with it. After a while we turned to go home and he said, "I'm going to put the ball back where I found it."

"Don't you want to play with it?" I said.

"I want to put it back where I found it because it isn't mine." I thought for his age how mature he is. Jamie made me realize what you find isn't necessarily yours.

Judith Ball
Morehead City, Carteret-Craven Electric

To be loving

The deepest and most sincere love on earth is the best way I can describe what my children and grandchildren have taught me over the years. They remind me everyday that what I say and do could mold their lives forever.

When my daughter gave birth to my little granddaughter Celina, I had serious doubts that my grandson Ben (then 8) would be able to cope with all the changes he would be going through with a younger sibling. He had been the center of attention, being the only child and grandchild. Well, he sure did teach me a thing or two. He has been the most devoted, unselfish, caring and loving brother in the world. As you can see in the picture, they have genuine love and devotion for each other.

Barbara Hawks
Statesville, EnergyUnited

I doubted my grandson Ben would cope well when his sister Celina came along eight years later. I was wrong.

Send us your best—Earn $50

Here are the themes in our **"Nothing Could Be Finer"** series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you $50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

October 2005 My Favorite Photo
North Carolina people, places, things. Digital ones must be 300 dpi and at least 4 by 6 inches.

Deadline: August 15

November 2005 It's the Thought That Counts
The dumbest gift you ever received.

Deadline: Sept. 15

December 2005 Holiday Mishaps
Those holiday plans that just didn't work out as you hoped they would.

Deadline: Oct. 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay $50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616

   Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com

   Or through the Web: www.carolinacountry.com

Learning from students

I'm 24 years old and have 17 children, or at least that is what I tell everyone! You have to keep a sense of humor when you're a school teacher.

Being a first-year teacher in fourth grade, I learned many lessons from each student. Video games (Game Cube and X-Box, not Nintendo) and MTV/VH1 shows ("Cribs," "TRL," "Real World") rule their world. Today's kids know more about "life" than some doctors, nurses or police officers.

However, kids long for good old-fashioned love and attention. Many people say, "Oh, she's just a teacher." They do not understand what real teaching looks like. Eight hours (really 15!) of everyday are spent teaching the curriculum and having "no child left behind," but that is only part of reality.

The real lesson that I learned (from 17 teachers) was that I am more than "just a teacher." I practice many professions such as counselor, surrogate parent, motivational speaker, nurse, fashion expert, relationship specialist, psychologist, cheerleader, coach (especially football), disciplinarian, mentor and friend. On the last day of school, I received several notes, letters and cards. One letter said, "I'm so lucky to have you as my teacher. Thank you for all you've done. I love you like a Mom."

Being a teacher is a tiring, emotional and exhausting roller-coaster of a profession. However, it is an awesome responsibility, and I love learning lessons everyday.

Maria Merritt
Oakboro, Union Power Cooperative

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Help, loyalty, honesty and fixing things

I grew up an only child and never knew what I was missing not having a brother or sister. I have a 14-year-old daughter and a 12-year-old son. They have taught me so much. When they were little and my boy started walking, my daughter looked out for him. She would grab him by the collar and drag him out of trouble, or pull him to where he was supposed to be. So, lesson number one: Family looks out for each other.

I learned that the best gift is time spent together. Lesson number two: Spend time together.

Another thing is that Mom is the glue that holds it all together. When everything falls apart, Mom can fix it—and if she can't, Dad can.

You can tell Mom anything, ask her anything, and she'll tell you the truth.

These are just a few of the lessons that my children teach me and continue to teach me everyday.

Wendy Teague
Granite Falls , Blue Ridge Electric

Sustainable Design Competition brings changes to college building design programs

By Lane Smith

A building design competition managed by North Carolina's Advanced Energy organization has helped introduce sustainability and energy-efficiency into college design and construction courses statewide.

The North Carolina Sustainable Design Competition provides students enrolled in North Carolina's universities, community colleges and technical colleges with opportunities to learn and apply the principles of sustainable development in building design and construction by offering prize money for winning designs. Since the annual competition began in 2000, several colleges have incorporated these principles into their curricula.

Kristi Jeffcoats, executive director of the NCSBDC, says "The need for sustainable housing is essential in home building, to address the needs of homeowners and their environment such as energy efficiency, durability, health, comfort, water efficiency, universal design and minimal site disturbance."

East Carolina University, Cape Fear Community College and the College of the Albemarle have integrated sustainable building design into classes and projects. As a result of the NCSBDC, East Carolina University introduced a new class in the Department of Industrial Technology curriculum that allows students to integrate renewable energy and sound environmental and construction techniques into their design projects.

Cape Fear Community College participants are also working to incorporate sustainable design in class projects through community involvement. Ron Wilson, a professor at Cape Fear, said, "Some of my students have participated in [professional and environmental] meetings and community outreach actions. We have also obtained a small grant to establish a 'green' project in Wilmington."

At the College of the Albemarle, involvement with the NCSBDC has led to a direct influence on the North Carolina building industry. Two of the five students involved in last year's competition are now designing homes with an emphasis on sustainability in the Outer Banks area. "Last year was our first participation in the design competition and already there has been a large influence on our community," said Charles Purser, assistant professor of Architectural Technology at the college. "The process has opened my eyes as an instructor to the world of sustainable design and how we, as a school, approach design as a whole."

The design competition requires participating student teams to design a home and incorporate sustainable energy approaches in the design. Required approaches include the use of locally available materials and identifying and magnifying particular assets of the site. Local competitions are held at each participating college or university (there are nine so far), and winners go to the state competition. Teams are composed of students from different areas of study including engineering, design, architecture and interior design. Winning teams not only receive a $5,000 check but also have the opportunity to have their design actually built.

Courtesy of NCSBDC

A model of the second-place winner in the Sustainable Design project, designed by the N.C. State University team.

At this year's competition, first place went to the "A-Team" from Cape Fear Community College. Their design incorporated energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation and waste reduction. Second and third places were awarded to "The Toxic Avengers" from N. C. State University and "The Greeniacs" from Forsyth Tech Community College, respectively. Honorable mentions were awarded to "Elements of Nature," "Synergy" and "The Green Guardians," all of which are collaborations between students from East Carolina University and Pitt Community College.

The design competition was established in 2000 by Advanced Energy board member L. Phillip Mayrand Jr. in honor of his deceased father, L.P. Mayrand Sr. Phillip Mayrand believes that "we can change the way we design and build buildings using the fresh, uncluttered minds of college-aged students."

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives are members of Advanced Energy, a nonprofit organization in Raleigh that works to create economic and environmental benefits through innovative approaches to energy. Advanced Energy is involved in many projects to research and develop ways to address the components of sustainable design. They include the SystemVision® approach to housing, Environments for Living, and mold and moisture workshops. To learn more, visit www.advancedenergy.org and www.sustainabledesigncompetition.org

Lane Smith is the communications assistant at Advanced Energy.

Finding Fish Dam Road

Text by Sidney Cruze / Photos by "fish dammer" students

"Lots of times what you're looking for is not just laid out in front of you. Finding it takes hard work and dedication."

Joe Liles
N.C. School of Science and Math

One spring morning last year, a van filled with students from the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics headed west toward Hillsborough, its passengers singing the tune to Merle Haggard's 1969 hit song, "Okie from Muskogee." These teenagers weren't making music about white lightning and Old Glory, they had their own lyrics. They were singing about an historic highway called Fish Dam Road:

We're riding on the Magic Bus this morning
We'd rather be out here than at the mall
We don't care what people say about us
Fish Dam Road is the biggest thrill of all

This old "high road" ran east-west on a ridge south of the Eno River, between the Neuse River in Durham County and the Orange County town of Hillsborough. It was once a major thoroughfare, but all that is left of it today are rounded gouges worn into the earth, most of them just wide enough for a car to pass through, and some as deep as 12 feet. These remnants of Fish Dam Road tell a story that is more than 300 years old. Indians first walked the road in the 1600s, then European settlers traveled it by horse and wagon until the 1920s. By 2003 the road was buried by urban development and long forgotten—until Joe Liles and his "fish dammers" brought it back to life.

An art teacher for 25 years at the School of Science and Math, Liles wanted his students to contribute to a community project. They spent 10 full days tracing Fish Dam Road, first comparing aerial photos with colonial maps, then slogging through streams and fallen leaves to find it. They used GPS technology to plot their discoveries, and mapped it from end to end. Each student created artwork highlighting the road, and the Eno River Association used these photographs, poems and drawings as inspiration for its 2005 photographic calendar titled "The Search for Fish Dam Road."

Tracking the road took the students on a journey back in time. It connected them to the cultural history and natural heritage of the North Carolina Piedmont. Along the way, they met descendants of the Native Americans, Europeans and African Americans who lived by the road long ago and heard stories about what life in this region was like over hundreds of years.

The original fish dam

The road is named after an ancient fish trap, a giant "V" of stones that Indians placed in the once-shallow waters of the Neuse River to funnel fish down-

stream. When the fish reached the narrow opening, the Indians plucked them from the water for food. The Europeans who settled along the Neuse years later called their community Fish Dam.

Today those stones lie beneath the Falls Lake Reservoir. Back in the early 1900s, before the Neuse River was dammed to create the reservoir, travelers could ford the river and follow Fish Dam Road east into Wake County. Local historians speculate the road may have continued along the Neuse River all the way to the coast.

Before the students could find Fish Dam Road, they had to learn how to read the landscape for the clues it left behind. Over the years, horses' hooves and wagon wheels packed the roadbed, leaving a gouge that is lower than the surrounding terrain. But not every dip in the earth is Fish Dam Road; some are just footpaths or horse trails. Large oak trees, fence lines, broken chimneys, stacked stones and non-native plants mark the home sites that years ago sat along the road.

The students followed these clues, but still, they often walked through the woods for hours, pushing through branches and brambles, looking for signs of the road.

"Finding Fish Dam Road is a metaphor for finding anything worthwhile in life," Liles said. "Lots of times what you're looking for is not just laid out in front of you. Finding it takes hard work and dedication."

After they located the road Liles asked his students to stand in it quietly, to listen for its call. "He said it would connect us to the past," Lucy Cho said.

The people of Fish Dam Road

The people they met, the old-timers who lived by the side of the road, brought the past to life. John Blackfeather Jeffries, a descendant of the Occaneechi Indians who also is employed by Piedmont Electric, explained how his people hunted and farmed along the road near the Eno River. Marian Sands described growing up on a farm near Hillsborough, and told the students how her family hid cured hams in the walls of their house when General Sherman marched through town.

"Listening to these stories made me a more well-rounded scholar," Cho said. "It made me a people scholar."

Brother and sister John and Mary Scarlett told the students about life as African Americans in the early 1900s. Their grandfather, Levi Scarlett, was a slave who became a free man in 1878 when he agreed to care for his former owners, Mariah and Delilah Scarlet, until they passed away. He inherited 150 acres of Orange County land from the sisters, and John and Mary grew up on that land.

The fish dammer students of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. Opposite page shows their teacher Joe Liles.

Mary spent her childhood in a log cabin with nine brothers and sisters. At 91, she still remembers getting stuck in the road as a girl. "One time there was sleet on the ground. I was just big enough to get the mail. I went down in there to get the mail but I had a hard time getting out on account of the road was kind of icy."

John Scarlett told the fish dammers to remember their creator and keep a sober mind. "Respect your elders and your parents and be careful for what you say to people," he added.

For student Mattie Spinks, meeting the Scarletts was the best part of the search. "They're not that old," she said. "Hearing their stories, I can see how much has changed. I wonder, how much will things change in our lifetime?"

Liles took his students searching for Fish Dam Road to teach them how valuable hard work done outside the classroom can be. "You can get guiding lessons in life from observing nature, and I wanted my students to discover that."

Finding the road showed him how man and nature have coexisted over the years in Orange and Durham counties.

"Walking down in the gouge of the road, I felt a profound connection to the past," he said. "I could imagine the American Indians walking on it, Europeans going by mule or horse and wagon. I felt part of the big river of humanity that has traveled this road for 300 years."

His students relished the discovery of something that they were the first people to understand and appreciate. "I liked the mystery of finding something unknown," Melissa Myott said.

At the end of each day the students were tired but happy. Riding home in the van, they sang about their search for Fish Dam Road:

We're gonna track that road all through the hillside
We've learned to hear its sweet and gentle call
We're gonna bring that road back to the sunlight
Fish Dam Road is the biggest thrill of all

Sidney Cruze, a Carolina Country contributing writer, can be reached at sidneywrites@verizon.net

"Suppertime"

Art by Ronald Ragland

Raleigh-based artist Ronald Ragland has issued his latest print "Suppertime," which depicts his grandfather plowing a field with a hand-held plow pulled by a mule. A Granville County native, Ragland spent 40 years as commercial artist and now that he is retired he enjoys painting scenes from his past. He has made a specialty of painting beagles.

In his eight years of retirement he has created six paintings that he markets in Progressive Farmer magazine, online and with his mailing list of former buyers.

The print measures 16 by 20 inches, and is sold unframed. The price of the print is $60 with free shipping.

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Linemen can get a head start at Nash Community College

By Charles S. Martin

An electric lineman is like a snake handler—one false move on the job and he gets zapped. Linemen will tell you that not everyone can do or would want to do this kind of work. It takes thousands of hours of training, acute mental alertness and top physical conditioning. You must be prepared to work in terrain that can be steeper, higher, harder, dryer, colder, hotter, darker and more dangerous than anywhere anyone else will go.

"The work of a lineman," says Waverly Bond, director of operations for Pitt & Greene EMC in Farmville, "is really where the rubber meets the road."

That means it can be really hard.

On a sunny day not long ago on U.S. 1 in Vance County, Wake EMC linemen worked diligently at building a brand new substation. One of the crew members was a young, tall, lean fellow in overalls who had been onboard less than a year. "We call him Superman," said one of the veteran linemen.

It turns out the rookie's real name is Clark—as in Clark Kent—Blackburn. Wake Electric had recruited him from the Electric Lineman Technology program at Nash Community College. He is one of two linemen who enrolled in the college program and now work with electric cooperatives. The other is Marcus Clayton at Pitt & Greene EMC.

Earn diplomas or college credits

The program offers high school graduates an opportunity to learn about electric utility line work while earning college credits. Courses include transmission structures, safety, above-ground and underground line construction, substations, electricity principles, math and communications. Some of the training takes place on a specially-equipped field at Nash. Blackburn and Clayton were the first two who completed the "diploma program" who were then hired by a co-op.

The training field was built in cooperation with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. NCAEC trains co-op linemen from throughout the state at the field. In the 1998–1999 school year, NCAEC and Nash Community College introduced the Electric Lineman Technology program that allows linemen to earn a college degree, beyond the diploma program. Earning the degree requires further courses in writing, mathematics, computers, business principles and electrical computations. The Associate in Applied Science Degree program has become a national model. So far, 127 linemen employed at co-ops have participated and three have earned degrees.

Putting skills and knowledge to work

Soon after he finished at Nash and began working at Wake Electric, Clark Blackburn was one of the men sent to Alabama and Florida to help cooperatives restore their systems destroyed by Hurricane Charley in August 2004. "When you help people get their lights turned on, you immediately see how you've helped them," said Blackburn.

At Pitt & Greene EMC, longtime crew leader Tony Vandiford said his young recruit, Marcus Clayton, is well suited for line work. One way to tell, Vandiford said, is that "he'll do anything." By doing anything, he can learn everything.

Clayton said, "You don't get near as much hands-on experience in school as you do out in the field. The job itself teaches you a lot."

8,576 hours of training = good linemen

Electric co-op linemen are required to participate in training that teaches about the job in stages. The cooperatives' apprenticeship program meets the standards of the N.C. Department of Labor. The purpose is to ensure that linemen have a thorough knowledge of the principles of electric distribution systems and safety practices. It involves 8,000 hours of on-the-job training taught by linemen who already have completed training, plus 576 hours of related instruction. Most of the 576 hours of

Charles S. Martin

Photos this page: First-year lineman Clark Blackburn at work in a new Wake Electric substation.

coursework takes place at the Nash training field, but some involves classroom time and video lessons.

"The most important thing is that a lineman knows how to work safely," said Waverly Bond at Pitt & Greene EMC, "and that he provides a safe working environment to protect others. The Nash program gives us an opportunity to locate people who have shown an interest in training to become a lineman." He added that co-op managers can feel confident that someone who has been through the Nash program has the skills to make a good lineman.

The time and cost involved in sending linemen to the Nash program, says Phil Price, who is chief operating officer at Wake Electric, pays dividends for employees and members because the co-op relies on their linemen to build, maintain and repair the electric distribution system safely and efficiently.

Charles S. Martin is an education and training projects manager with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Michael Gery

Michael Gery

First-year lineman Marcus Clayton (above and at right) works with other Pitt & Greene EMC crew members.

To learn more about the Nash Community College training program, contact the N.C. Association of Electric Cooperatives: (919) 875-3063.

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Darlene and Guy Brittain, Connelly Springs

From Hora Huntly, Stanley

... You used 'mader peelings to get 'bacca gum off your hands.

... You roasted sweet taters in fireplace ashes.

... You took a Saturday night warsh in a foot tub behind the kitchen woodstove.

... You had to prime the pump on the back porch with hot water when it froze.

From Lula Grover, Fayetteville

... You and your brothers tried to make black moria chewing tobacco by adding grandma's molasses to rolled up tobacco leaves and pressing it into plugs up under the house.

... Your favorite toy was a young sweet gum tree, so you could swing from side to side.

... All the ladies at church had a P.H.D. ("Penticostal Hairdo").

... You cried all the way to church because your sister told you that they were having a foot-washing and you hadn't washed your feet that morning.

From Darlene and Guy Brittain, Connelly Springs

... You have a flower bed in a tractor tire on your front yard.

... You think professional TV wrestling is real.

... Your grandma called you "little booger."

... You know where the Old Crow funeral home is.

... You bait your rod and reel with cheese then cast it around the hog pen trying to catch rats.

... You pour a pack of Tom's salty peanuts into your R.C. which you bought at Boyles General Store in downtown Tolucca.

... Your friend says it is colder than a donkey's butt.

... A "haint" got after your uncle on Saturday night on his way home from going a'courting.

... You had a Pal soft drink from the Pool bottling company or a Double cola from the Granite bottling company in Granite Falls.

... You remember seeing men in black and white striped suits working on the roads and trimming a right of way.

... You have watched your dad patch a copper still and bend a worm.

From Dennis Hunter, Wadesboro

... You washed your undies on a scrub-board.

... You used iron wire to roll your hair.

... Your father or mother used a cereal bowl to give you a hair cut.

... You wore a dry-cleaning bag for a rain hat.

From Clementine Tilley, Rocky Mount

... You marinate onion and sugar together to get rid of a cough.

... You rub cornmeal on heat bumps to stop the itching.

... You've crawled under the house after a nice rain to make mud cakes.

From Nelda Hartman, Cherryville

... Your radio's battery was bigger than the radio.

... The only clothes dryer you ever knew was a wire tied between two trees.

... You cracked open a crawdad head to get the pearl out.

... You took down the bully of the hill with a twine string tied in a bull-tongue plow.

... You watched your mom cook a feast for the wheat threshers.

... You sopped a 'lassey boiler.

... You put eggs in a poke and took them to the store to trade for candy.

From Nancy Bodenheimer, Kernersville

... You shot marbles and played Ring Around the Roses, Jack Rocks, Red-Rover-Red-Rover.

... You've gone on a snipe hunt.

... You have cut pulp wood.

... Every time you got sick you got a dose of black draught or catnip tea, depending on what ailed you.

... You know what sang root and star root are, and what they're worth.

... You have dammed up a creek and used it as a family swimming pool.

... As a girl, you went opossum hunting and squirrel hunting.

... You learned to drive on your Dad's doodlebug that doubled as your family's wood saw.

... There were so many children in your family that your daddy, instead of calling your name, pointed or looked at you and just called you "young'n."

... You know what a scritch owl is.

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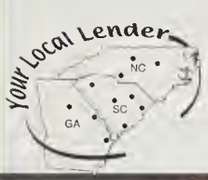

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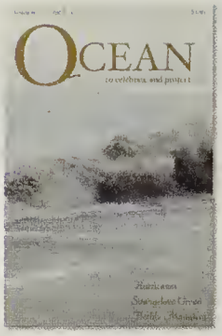
Magazine about the sea



OCEAN magazine celebrates our Earth's water—its beauty, resources and wildlife. Quarterly issues pose a question to readers, to be answered by them in the following issue along with poems, stories and articles written with fact and feeling. The magazine also offers photo contests, with announcements of the winner in each issue. The publisher and editor is Diane Buccheri of Rodanthe, a member of Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative. The next issue is due Oct. 1, or you can go on the Web site to purchase the previous issue (July). Individual magazines are $4.95 each. Annual subscriptions are $17.50.

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Custom tapestry

Polk Traditions, based in Tryon, offers woven art in many forms, including afghans, wall hangings, pillows and throws. Print design topics range from dogs and cats, equestrian, wildlife and inspirational to sports and country items. The products are made of Jacquard woven cotton, with years of experience in their designs. Afghans and throws range from $35 to $60, wall hangings from $40 to $400, and pillows from $10 to $35. Polk Traditions offers more than 300 items to choose from, and ships within two days of an order if the item is in stock.

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What's on the 2005 map?

For the second year, North Carolina's official transportation map showcases the state's heritage of craft tradition, its artisans and the world-renowned works they create. The map features craft destinations like North Carolina's official "Pottery Highway," a strip of N.C. 705 boasting more than 100 pottery shops and galleries, and gives a glimpse of Tar Heel artisans and artworks. The map also provides information about environmental and safety efforts, distances from city to city, state attractions, and emergency contact numbers. Free copies are available at North Carolina's Visitor Centers, online and by phone.

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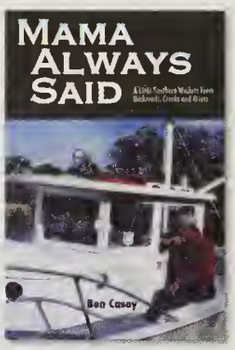
ON THE BOOKSHELF

"Mama Always Said"



This book of humorous essays and photographs by Pamlico County author and photographer Ben Casey spans a variety of topics. Chapters include "Your Brain: Keep It With You," "Monkeys May Not Be Uncles But They Are Smart Neighbors," "Why Does Less Cost More," "Murder in the Wild" and "Save The Trees: No More Church Bulletins." "Mama Always Said: A Little Southern Wisdom From Backroads, Creeks and Rivers" is published by The Chapel Hill Press in Chapel Hill. Softcover, 211 pages, $15.95.

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"Adventure Guide To The Triangle"

This new comprehensive overview describes paddling, hiking and mountain biking trails, and state and locally designated road biking routes in the immediate Triangle area, along with several outlying counties. Author Maia Dery grew up in the Triangle and she notes she has paddled, walked or biked every route covered in the guide. Each trail has in-depth directions and difficulty ratings. The rivers are broken down by section, with classes, levels and major rapids listed along with put-in and takeout descriptions. Published by John F. Blair, Publisher. Softcover, 452 pages, $19.95.

(800) 222-9796
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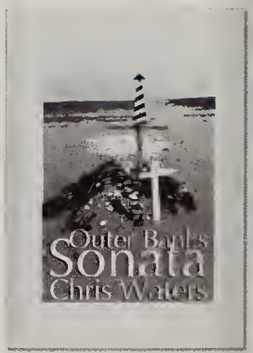
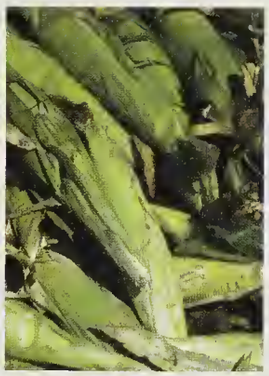
"Outer Banks Sonata"



Lauded poet and Wilmington-born Chris Waters has been visiting the Outer Banks since the 1950s. In his newest compilation, "Outer Banks Sonata," he presents poems, sonnets and prose that comb the beaches and reveal a busy world of sky, sand and sea. Poems include "Hatteras Beach," "End of an August Day," "Graveyard of the Atlantic," "Silly Ginger," "When the Pheasant Dies" and "Island Bird Club." "Outer Banks Sonata" is published by Market Street Press of Greensboro. Softcover, 47 pages, $9.

(252) 995-4324
www.amazon.com

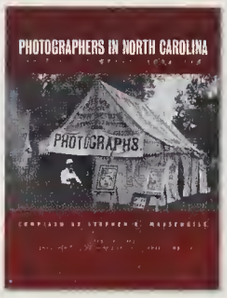
Farm-fresh finds



At the North Carolina Farm Fresh online site, you can find out specific locations for farmers' markets, roadside stands and pick-your-own farms. Maps allow you to select regions, and other links let you choose a particular produce such as pumpkins and find information on pumpkin recipes, nutrition information and special events such as pumpkin festivals. Categories broaden to include topics such as grapes/wines, Christmas trees, herbs and organics in North Carolina.

www.ncfarmfresh.com

Historic look at N.C. photographers



This biographical directory records the names, residences and dates of the active work of more than 2,500 photographers who captured the state's rich history between 1842 and 1941. The book also includes a sampling of striking black and white images from some early photographers. Compiled by historian Stephen E. Massengill, this record of past accomplishments includes essays by Massengill and two other North Carolina historians. "Photographers in North Carolina: The First Century, 1842-1947" is published by North Carolina Office of Archives and History. Softcover, 264 pages, $28.

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Aug. 26–27, Polkville
(828) 245-5339
www.gvcmusic.com

Quilt Show
Aug. 26–27, Lincolnton
(704) 735-0751

6th Annual Art on Green
Aug. 27, Statesville
(704) 873-4734
www.iredellmuseums.org

Bluegrass Festival
Aug. 27, Love Valley
(336) 764-2220

PIEDMONT

"NightBEAT"
Aug. 2, Charlotte
(803) 547-2665
www.nbeat@carolinacrown.org

Robbins Farmers Day
Aug. 4, 5 & 6, Robbins
(910) 464-1290
www.robbinsfarmersday.com

Ellipsis: Contemporary Acoustic Trio
Aug. 6, Pilot Mountain
(336) 368-7111
www.sawbriar.com

Blueridge Bluegrass
Aug. 13, Oakboro
(704) 485-3649
www.oakboromusichall.com

Jupiter and Venus Star Party
Aug. 13, Gastonia
(704) 866-6900
www.schielemuseum.org

Mayberry Nights
Aug. 19, Oakboro
(704) 485-3649
www.oakboromusichall.com

Extreme Rides Car Show
Aug. 19–20, Henderson
(252) 438-2222
www.kerrlake-nc.com

Yadkin Valley Ranch Rodeo
Aug. 19–20, Hamptonville
(336) 468-8223

36 Degrees North: Bluegrass
Aug. 20, Pilot Mountain
(336) 368-7111
www.sawbriar.com

Vehicles, Tractor and Motorcycle Show
Aug. 20, Lexington
(336) 787-5582
www.itsagascarshow.com

The Sauce Boss Bill Wharton
Aug. 21, Asheboro
(336) 626-1240

Elvis Tribute Day
Aug. 27, Mint Hill
(704) 545-6618

Wood & Steel: Bluegrass
Aug. 27, Pilot Mountain
(336) 368-7111
www.sawbriar.com

COAST

Purple Martin Roost Festival
Aug. 6, Manteo
(252) 475-1500, Ext. 244
www.purplemartinroost.com

Summer Arts & Craft Show
Aug. 3–4, Buxton
(252) 995-4551

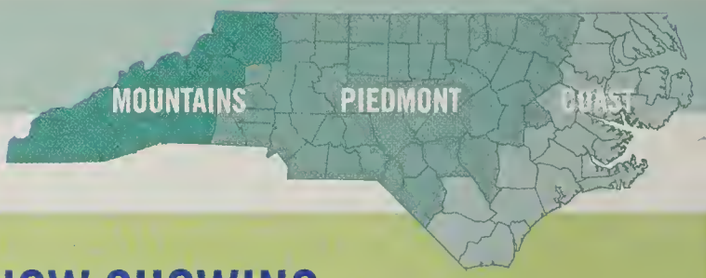
Watermelon Festival
Aug. 3–6, Murfreesboro
(252) 398-5922
www.ncheritage@earthlink.net

Challenger King Mackerel Tournament
August 5–6, Emerald Isle
(252) 354-3106

Sand Castle Competition
Aug. 6, Atlantic Beach
(252) 240-1200

Saturday in Park Music
Aug. 6, Newton Grove
(910) 385-8166

August Events *continued*



Scrimshaw Workshop
Aug. 11, Beaufort
(252) 728-5225

Blackbeard
Through Aug. 13, Bath
(252) 923-4171
www.ormondamphitheatre.com

Rock N Roll Relief 2005
Aug. 13, Manteo
www.redpearlproductions.com

Intermediate Basket Weaving
Aug. 18, Beaufort
(252) 728-5225

Beach Jive After Five
Aug. 18, Emerald Isle
(252) 354-6350

"The Oak Grove Boys"
Aug. 20, Rocky Mount
(252) 972-3331

Beginners Knitting
Aug. 25, Beaufort
(252) 728-5225

Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival
Aug. 26. Greenville
1-800-ECU-ARTS

"Flavor of the Past"
Aug. 27, Wilmington
(910) 341-4350
www.capefearmuseum.com

Listing Information

Deadlines: For October: August 25
For November: September 25

Submit Listings Online: Visit www.carolinacountry.com and click "See NC" to add your event to the magazine and/or our Web site.

Or Submit Listings by Mail, Fax or E-Mail: Include title, date(s), location, phone number and/or Web site url. Photos (300 dpi or hard copies) are welcome.

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Smith-McDowell House
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www.wnchistory.org

PIEDMONT

Chuck Close Prints
Through Aug. 7, Charlotte
The Mint Museum of Art
(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

Vanguard Collecting
Through Aug. 21
Winston-Salem, Early Reynolda House collection
(888) 663-1149
www.reynoldahouse.org

Murano: Glass from Spanu Collection
Through Aug. 21, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Craft & Design, (704) 337-2009
nrider@mintmuseum.org

Invention At Play
Through Sept. 5, Durham
(919) 220-5429 x323
www.ncmls.org

Forces of Nature
Through Sept. 6, Charlotte
Discovery Place
(704) 372-6261
omnimaxinfo@discoveryplace.org

CSI: Crime Scene Insects
Through Sept. 18
Raleigh, N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences
(919) 733-7350
www.naturalsciences.org

"These Little Piggies Stayed Home"
Through Oct. 20
Lexington, Uptown Lexington
(336) 249-0383
www.uptownlexington.com

"Within Our Walls"
Through Nov. 1
Charlotte, Lassiter Gallery
(704) 373-1464
www.lassitergallery.com/art/art_04.htm

"War on Terror"
Through Dec. 2005
Fayetteville, Airborne & Special Operations Museum
(866) 547-0649
www.asomf.org

COAST

Summer Pleasures Art
Through Aug. 31, Morehead City, Carolina Artist Studio Gallery, (252) 726-7550
www.cagallery.net

Watercolor Paintings by Freeman Beard
Aug. 3–Sept. 27, Manteo
Festival Park Art Gallery
(252) 475-1500
www.roanokeisland.com

Browse the "Summer Pleasures" art exhibit at Carolina Artist Studio Gallery held through August 31 in Morehead City. Call (252) 726-7550 or visit www.cagallery.net

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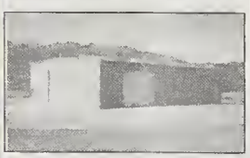

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Miss Fitts

Use the capital letters in the code clue below to fill in the blanks above.

"AEDGHNORSTV" means unscrambled

Say Watt?

I	E	M	O
C	F	C	P
I	E	L	X
D	S	E	E

Cy Nical Says, "Pyramid designers obviously had E_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _S."

Starting with an E and ending with S, can you spell out the two missing words? Each letter is used only once. Move in any direction, left, right, up, down or diagonally.

MATH WIRDZ

PIE in the SKY

Letters have been substituted for digits in this division problem. Can you replace the missing digits that get the PIE out of the SKY?

```
      P  I  E
      1
   ------------
E  | S  K  Y
   
_  _  _  _
      E
      -
      K  K
      -  -
      K  T
      ----
         P  Y
         1  _
         P  Y
         1
         ---
```

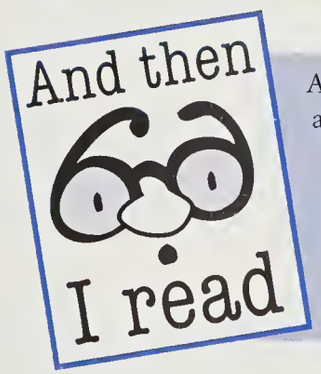
For answers, please turn to page 41.

Phone*etics

7 4 6 6 3 8 4 2 7

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

If you were to punch in the number above on your telephone key pad you would spell out a nine-letter word in which no letter is repeated. Go figure!



A reader who prefers not to be identified sends along this cultural note from Raleigh.

The program for a piano recital she attended listed one composer as **"Lewd Wig Beethoven."**

Ludwig must be rolling over in his grave and tearing his hair.

Domi-no.s w/O

Walt Kreiling of Union County came up with a second solution to the Domi-no.s puzzle in July's magazine. Noting that 0 is a digit, he solved it this way:

```
ORANGE x P = PURPLE
120795 x 3 = 362385
```

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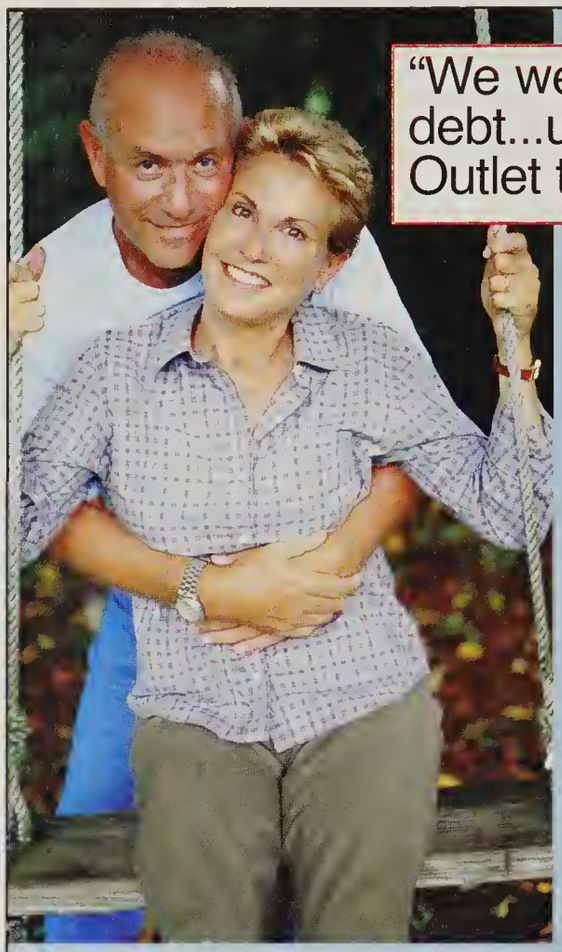

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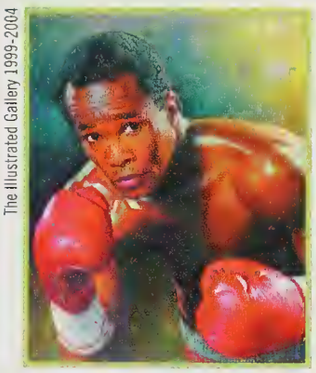
Getting To Know...

Sugar Ray Leonard



Name: Ray Charles "Sugar Ray" Leonard. His mother named him Ray Charles after the legendary singer. He chose to call himself Sugar Ray in a nod to famous boxer Sugar Ray Robinson.

Born: May 17, 1956, in Wilmington.

Known for: Boxing. A naturally athletic Ray Leonard turned to boxing at age 14 to escape inner city strife and enjoyed unusual success in the ring. He won the gold medal at the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. After turning professional in 1977, Leonard won his first 27 fights against some of the finest boxers of the modern era and was the first boxer to win world titles in five different weight classes. His record stands to this day. The fast, agile boxer's last fight was March 1997. Leonard's final record stands at 36-3-1 with 25 KOs (knockouts). After retiring, he became a television broadcaster for NBC, ABC, HBO and ESPN.

Accomplishments: Besides winning numerous boxing titles, Leonard has also been the national spokesman for EA Sports, Vartec Telecom, Track, Inc., Ford, Carnation, 7-Up, Nabisco and Revlon. He was a mentor to talented young boxers on the reality TV show "The Contender," which premiered January 2005. Leonard is committed to improving the sport of boxing and focuses much of his energy on the Sugar Ray Leonard Youth Foundation, which educates children about the dangers of drug abuse, gangs and violence. Leonard is also an advertising "face" for D.A.R.E. America, the anti-drug and anti-violence campaign.

Quote: "You have to know you can win. You have to think you can win. You have to feel you can win."

Do You Know...

The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in Buxton is the tallest operating lighthouse in the United States and is a National Historic Landmark. First constructed in 1870, the majestic 4,800-ton-plus tower became threatened by erosion and was raised hydraulically and rolled successfully to a safer location inshore in 1999. The mighty lighthouse, 210 feet tall above sea level, is operated by the National Park Service, It's open to the public from early April until October 10. Visitors can climb 257 of its 268 iron spiral stairs for a spectacular view of the national seashore, take a guided tour and explore the visitor center and museum with gift shop. Lighthouse admission is $6 for adults, $3 for children 12 and under, and $3 for seniors. Call (252) 995-4474 or visit www.nps.gov/caha

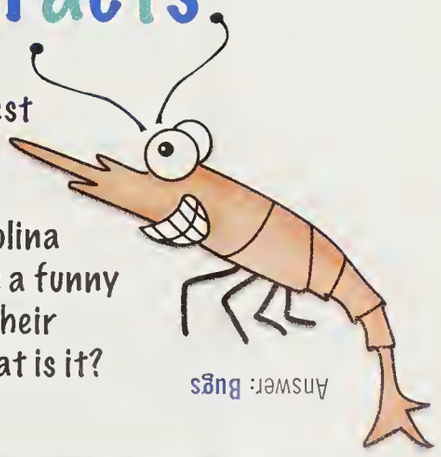
Field Trip Fun

Hill Ridge Farms

For old-fashioned, educational fun, check out Hill Ridge Farms in Youngsville. Located about 20 minutes north of Raleigh, the farm offers gemstone panning, hayrides and a petting zoo. Students can also see gardens, navigate a maze and ride a train. The farm is open for field trips from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Next month, their Fall Harvest & Pumpkin Festival begins September 22 and continues each weekend through October 31 with special packages. Call (800) 358-4170 or visit www.hillridgefarms.com

Fun Facts

Fishermen who harvest shrimp along the North Carolina coast have a funny name for their catch. What is it?



Answer: Bugs

SURF IT!

For more about lighthouses, www.maine.com/lights/www_vl.htm

For Sugar Ray Leonard, www.imdb.com/name/nm0005145

We'd like to hear from you!

If you have suggestions or comments about our bimonthly youth page, Tar Heel Lessons, e-mail carolina.country@ncemcs.com, write Carolina Country Tar Heel Lessons, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611, or call (800) 662-8835, ext. 3036.

By Carla Burgess

The Virtues of Crinum Lilies

It's the rare Southern gardener who hasn't seen or begged a piece of a crinum (pronounced CRY-num). The flowering plants many of us know as milk-and-wine lilies are a type of crinum, which belongs to the amaryllis family. Most crinums have trumpet-like flowers that are borne in clusters atop tall stems, or scapes, though some have more delicate spider-like petals. The seductive perfume of the blossoms varies, but the scent may resemble musk, vanilla or citrus. Milk-and-wine is an informal, catchall description of white-flowered crinums whose petals are bisected by a reddish stripe that may be deep burgundy to pale pink.

Jay Yourch

The crinum 'Stars and Stripes' is a late-season bloomer that is readily available and easy to grow.

Crinums have a long history of hybridization, more than two centuries, and today some 200 varieties exist with white, red, pink or striped flowers. Some bulbs multiply rapidly by producing bulblets or suckers and may develop extensive fleshy root systems. With exceptions, crinums adapt to dry or moist conditions and a range of soil types in sun or filtered shade, and many are winter-hardy throughout most of North Carolina. Crinums don't mind being pampered, but it's not required.

Depending on variety, crinums make their show of flowers anytime from spring through fall, and some may bloom for months, sending up new scapes with clusters of a couple to a dozen flowers each. Crinums have grass-like or strappy leaves that form handsome clumps. I asked Jay Yourch, a serious crinum grower in Raleigh, to name a favorite from more than 60 varieties in his garden. He chose 'Mrs. James Hendry' for its large, very fragrant flowers held on sturdy, tall scapes, and its tidy, compact foliage. Florida crinum enthusiast Alani Davis chose 'Improved Peach Blow' as a favorite among more than 80 types in his garden. A quick on-line catalog search turned up a blooming-sized 'Mrs. James Hendry' at $35 per bulb and 'Improved Peach Blow' at $200! You may have to pace yourself when collecting rarer crinums. But smaller bulbs and bulbs of less exotic varieties can be had for under $10. Sentimental favorites are 'Cecil Houdyshell', with pink flowers on 3-foot stalks that bloom from summer to fall, and 'Ellen Bosanquet', a summer-bloomer with dark-rose flowers atop 2-foot stalks. These are readily available, affordable and good choices for beginners. For small gardens, there's 'Hannibal's Dwarf', with 18-inch stems bearing slender-petaled pink flowers.

Crinums have been somewhat elusive to shoppers, but specialty mail-order nurseries exist. Jay has compiled a list of recommended sources at: http://lists.ibiblio.org/pipermail/pbs/2004-July/018673.html. A few worth mentioning here are Marcelle's Crinums at www.marcellescrinums.com and North Carolina-based Plant Delights at www.plantdelights.com. If you decide to take a division from an established plant, arm yourself with a sharp spade or shovel. Root balls can be unyielding and as large as a basketball. Also, expect diminished flowering for the next season or two.

Another note that ought to raise a hallelujah: The many deer that browse Jay's wooded garden ignore the crinums. The same goes for voles and rabbits, he says.

Flowers on the Menu

We've all heard the saying, "Eat your veggies." But what about "Eat your flowers"? Pansies and nasturtiums add a zing to salads and make a colorful garnish. Squash blossoms can be battered and fried, and daylily buds are tasty sautéed. Chive blossoms impart flavor and color to herb vinegars. Flowers of herbs usually have the same flavor of their leaves. Avoid eating blossoms of plants sprayed with pesticides. Also, be sure the flowers you dine on are safe to eat. Ask your cooperative extension agent for a copy of "Edible Flowers" (Horticultural Leaflet No. 8513) or download it at www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/hortinfo.html

Tomatoes Forever

Is this year's crop of tomatoes the best you've ever tasted? Consider saving seeds for next summer's garden. Cut a ripe tomato in half and squeeze the seeds and pulp into a small plastic container with a lid. Place in a warm area for several days to ferment. Rinse the seeds well and place on a paper towel or plate to dry. Store in refrigerator. (Seeds of hybrid tomatoes will not breed purely.)

Veggies in Pots

Growing vegetables in containers is good for the back—no stooping to weed, water or harvest. But be sure to give them enough room. Rules of thumb for minimum pot sizes: cherry tomatoes, 1 gallon; other tomatoes, 5 gallon; cucumber, 5 gallon; winter squash, 3 gallon; summer squash and bell pepper, 2 gallon; green onion, leaf lettuce, beets and Swiss chard, ½ gallon; cabbage, 5 gallon; carrot, 1 quart.

GO ONLINE

For more August gardening advice, including **how to deal with mosquitoes**, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com

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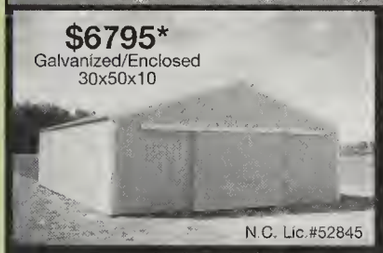

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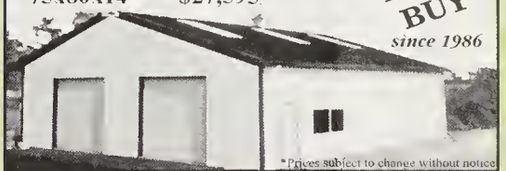

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By James Dulley

Options help you even out temperatures in problem rooms

When one or two rooms are too warm during the summer or too cold during the winter, people often change the thermostat setting to make the problem rooms comfortable. Each degree you raise the furnace or heat pump setting during the winter or lower it during the summer can increase your utility bills by one to three percent. Fortunately, there are several other things to do to even out room temperatures.

First, try to determine why those rooms are not staying the same temperature as the rest of the house. Hold a thermometer in the airflow from a register and compare it to the register air in the other comfortable rooms. Also, hold your hand over the register to feel if the airflow is equally strong to that in the other comfortable rooms.

If the register outlet air temperature is warmer (summer) or cooler (winter) than in other rooms, but as forceful, you may need to insulate those ducts. They are likely longer ducts (rooms that are further from the furnace) and may not be insulated from the outside walls or attic.

If you find the airflow is not as strong, make sure the dampers in the ducts leading to those problem rooms are fully open. It would be a good idea to wrap foil duct tape around all the duct joints. In a long duct, this can often make a significant improvement in the amount of conditioned (heated or cooled) air that actually gets to the room register.

Partially close the dampers in the ducts leading to the comfortable rooms. This will force more conditioned air to the problem rooms, which may balance out the temperatures throughout your home. Don't close the dampers more than halfway because you don't want to excessively increase the airflow resistance for the blower.

It is not difficult to install duct dampers if your existing ductwork does not have them. Another option is to install new register covers with adjustable louvers. This is more expensive than installing duct dampers, but the real wood and cast metal registers can be very attractive.

If the problem still exists, consider installing booster fans to force more conditioned air to those rooms. These are made in many sizes and configurations to fit almost any round or rectangular duct. They are easy to install in the duct. Some require just a hole in the ducts and others include a complete small section of duct. These fans use as little as 20 watts of electricity so they are inexpensive to operate.

Whenever the main blower starts, the booster fans also run. The on/off switches can be wired to the blower control in the furnace or heat pump to operate the fans. It can be tricky to wire several of them this way so professional installation of the wiring is advisable.

A simpler setup for do-it-yourselfers uses a pressure or sail switch. A sail switch is a lightweight plastic sail on a hinged wire. It is installed in a small hole in the duct. The airflow from the blower moves the sail and triggers the switch. A pressure switch is even smaller and it senses the pressure change when the blower starts to switch on the booster fans.

Another option is a quiet booster fan (Equalizer II by Suncourt) that is mounted over the top of the room floor or wall register and plugged into a standard electrical wall outlet. It uses only 27 watts of electricity. In addition to drawing more conditioned air through the duct into the room, the fins on its grille help to distribute the air in a more even pattern throughout the room.

The Equalizer has an adjustable built-in electronic thermostat to control when it comes on. It also has a summer and winter setting. It runs only when both the main blower is running and its thermostat calls for more heated or cooled air. A sensor inside the unit detects cool air (in the summer mode when the central air conditioner starts) to start the small fan.

If one warm room has a common wall with a cool room, install a through-the-wall fan. This small round fan has an attractive grille on each side and fits through the wall. It operates quietly, but moves enough air to help balance out the room temperature differences.

Booster fan

Register cover

Register air deflector

Where to find registers and booster fans:

Aero-Flo Industries
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Deflecto Corporation
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Field Controls
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Suncourt Manufacturing
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Warm Asparagus Spinach Salad

- 1½ pounds fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons plus ½ cup olive oil, divided
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1½ pounds uncooked penne or medium tube pasta
- ¾ cup chopped green onions
- 6 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 package (6 ounces) fresh baby spinach
- 1 cup coarsely chopped cashews
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Place asparagus in a 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil; sprinkle with salt. Bake, uncovered, at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until crisp tender, stirring every 10 minutes. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain.

For dressing, combine the onions, vinegar and soy sauce in a blender; cover and process. While processing, gradually add the remaining oil in a steady steam.

In a large salad bowl, combine pasta, spinach and asparagus. Drizzle with dressing; toss to coat. Sprinkle with cashews and Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

Yield: 14–16 servings

Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at www.tasteofhome.com.

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Ladyfinger Lemon Dessert

- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk
- 1 package (3 ounces) ladyfingers, split
- 1 package (3 ounces) lemon gelatin
- 1 cup boiling orange juice
- ½ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1 cup reduced fat whipped topping

Pour milk into a small metal mixing bowl, place mixer beaters in the bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight. Line the sides of a 9-inch springform pan with ladyfingers; set aside. In a large bowl, dissolve gelatin in orange juice. Stir in the sugar, lemon juice and peel; cool to room temperature.

Beat chilled milk until soft peaks form; fold into gelatin mixture. Pour into prepared pan. Refrigerate for a least 3 hours or until firm. Spread with whipped topping. Remove sides of pan. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 10 servings

Parsley Tortellini Toss

- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen cheese tortellini
- 1½ cups cubed provolone cheese
- 1½ cups cubed mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup cubed fully-cooked ham
- 1 cup cubed cooked turkey
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 2 medium carrots, shredded
- ½ medium sweet red pepper, diced
- ½ medium green pepper, diced
- 1 cup minced fresh parsley
- ½ cup olive or vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

Cook tortellini according to package directions; drain and rinse in cold water. Place in a large bowl; add the next eight ingredients. In a jar with tight-fitting lid, combine the remaining ingredients; shake well. Pour over salad and toss to coat. Cover and chill until serving.

Yield: 12–15 servings

Crisp Sweet Relish

- 8 cups ground cucumbers (about 5 pounds)
- 4 cups ground onions
- 2 cups ground carrots
- 5 tablespoons salt
- 7 cups sugar
- 4 cups white vinegar
- 2 teaspoons celery seed
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Combine the cucumbers, onions and carrots in a large bowl; sprinkle with salt. Cover with ice cubes. Let stand for 6 hours. Drain; rinse and drain thoroughly. In a large kettle, combine sugar, vinegar, celery seed, turmeric, nutmeg and pepper. Add vegetables; bring to boil over medium heat, stirring often. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Pack the hot mixture into hot jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust caps. Process for 10 minutes in a boiling-water bath.

Yield: 8 pints

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